

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Room H-218
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Room H-218
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128
The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Obey and Inouye, Vice Chairman Cochran, and Ranking Member Lewis:

We write to respectfully request that you support the funding for drug court programs provided in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010 and the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2010, when these bills are considered in conference. The combined \$103,900,000 in funding allocated by the House's marks (\$58,900,000 in the Labor/HHS bill and \$45,000,000 in the CJS bill) would enable drug courts to continue to play a critical role in lowering crime rates, effectively treating substance abuse problems, and reducing the long-term cost of addressing drug-related issues. There are currently more than 2,400 drug courts in operation or development in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and over 70 tribal locations.

Drug court programs, which were established under state and local law beginning in the late 1980s, divert non-violent, substance-abusing offenders from prison into treatment. Although the specifics of these programs vary by jurisdiction, they typically share many features in common. In general, the judges that preside over drug court proceedings monitor defendants' progress with mandatory drug testing and prescribe sanctions and rewards in consultation with prosecutors, defense counsel, and treatment providers. Most programs offer a range of treatment options, implemented on a case-by-case basis, and typically require a minimum one-year participation

before a defendant completes the program. The effectiveness of these programs is well-documented. As stated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy: "A decade of research indicates that drug court reduces crime by lowering rearrest and conviction rates, improving substance abuse treatment outcomes, and reuniting families, and also produces measurable cost benefits."

Every dollar spent on drug courts today can be expected to save money tomorrow by more effectively treating substance abuse and lowering rates of repeat offenders. We firmly believe that the combined \$103,900,000 appropriated by the Labor/HHS and CJS bills constitutes a prudent investment in state and local drug court programs.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

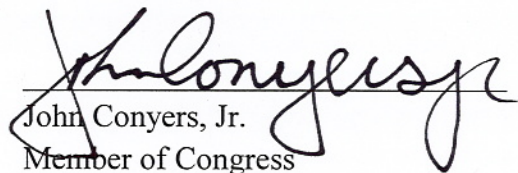
Sincerely,



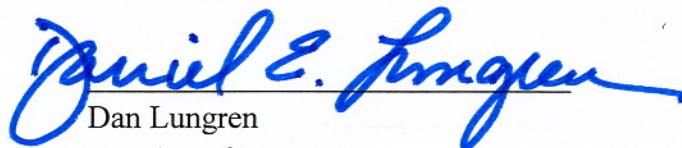
Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress



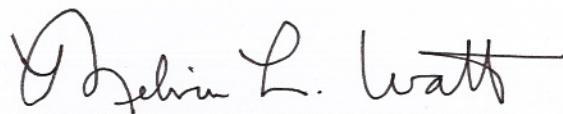
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



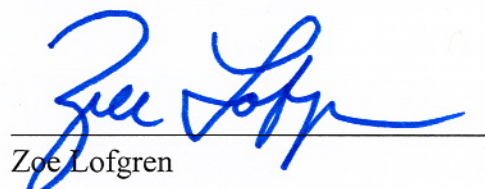
John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



Dan Lungren
Member of Congress



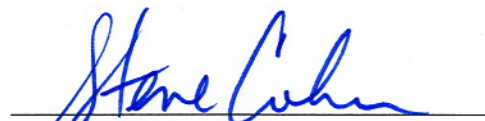
Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress



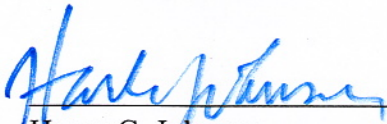
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



William D. Delahunt
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Henry C. Johnson
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

CC: Hon. Alan B. Mollohan, Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Hon. Frank R. Wolf, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Hon. Todd Tiahrt, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies